THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (e) The proposal to set up an Armed Forces Tribunal for speedy disposal of cases relating to the members of Armed Forces is under active consideration of the Government. The modalities of the Tribunal are being worked out in consultation with the Ministry of Law and Justice and the Department of Personnel and Training.

2. Provisions exist under the relevant sections of the Army Act, 1950, Navy Act, 1957 and Air Force act, 1950 for redressal of grievances of the Armed Forces personnel. Armed Forces personnel can submit representations, petitions or complaints through prescribed channels. Where the redress prayed for is not given, the intermediate authority forwards the complaint to the authority to whom the complaint is addressed, for final disposal. The existing provisions in the respective Acts of the three Services for redressal of grievances have been tested over a long period of time.

World Bank Study on Jharia Coalfield Fire

*160 SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the World Bank made an exhaustive study of Jharia coalfield fire in 1996 at an estimated cost of Rs. 700 crores and submitted its Report to the Coal Ministry but the Government have not taken any action on the Report so far;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) what are the findings of the Report; and

(d) by when Government is likely to act on this Report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) A World Bank aided project namely 'Jharia Mine Fire Control Technical Assistance Project' was completed in 1996-97 involving diagnostic study for fire fighting programme as well as environmental management plan for Jharia coalfield. The total cost involved for the above World Bank study was about Rs. 37 crores.

The total cost of fire control/subsidence control end rehabilitation as per the World Bank study was estimated to be Rs. 4071 crores and a time frame of 15—20 years for implementation was indicated.

A high level Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Coal) was constituted which submitted its recommendations. Schemes have since been taken up for fire/subsidence control and rehabilitation of people from most endangered areas.

(b) Does not arise in view of part (a) above.

(c) The main findings/recommendations of the fire report are as under:—

(i) In overall, fires have reduced in area from 17 Sq.Km. (1984) to 8.9 Sq.Km. (1995).

(ii) Dhanbad-Pahterdih rail line (2.8 Km.) is endangered by fires and requires grout stablisation, relocation preferred.

(iii) Adra-Gomoh rail line requires protection by isolation trench and water curtain.

(iv) Ekra, Kari and Chatkari Jore are endangered due to fires and require immediate grout stablisation.

(v) Jharia and Kirkend towns and other built up areas are endangered due to fires and require immediate isolation from fires. Shifting of townships have been recommended as a better option.

(vi) Improved use of existing technology will help abate fires in general.

(vii) Some fires may be excavated as part of a profitable open cast mining projects such as Block-III, Kusunda, Block-VIII and Tisra.

(viii) It is not possible to extinguish fires immediately but further advance of fires can be controlled by application of the recommended fire control measures.

(d) 14 schemes for fire/subsidence control and rehabilitation have been approved out of which 5 schemes have already been completed and remaining are under implementaiton at different stages. The details are given as under:—

(i) 5 stabilisation schemes at East Bhagatdih, Joyrampur (below Chatkari Jore), Kusunda/industry boundary (below Kari Jore),

Khas Kusunda and at Bata More in Jharia town with a capital outlay of Rs. 217.5 lakhs under Environmental Measures and Subsidence Control (EMSC) have already been completed.

(ii) 4 schemes for fire/subsidence control at Alkusa, Rajapur, South Lodna and Industry Collieries with a capital outlay of Rs. 1427.28 Lakhs under EMSC—all are under implementation.

(iii) 4 schemes for protection of railway lines/jores for fire/ subsidence control under Rehabilitation and Control of Fire and Subsidence (RCFS) with a capital outlay of Rs. 2560 Lakhs—all are under implementation. These schemes involve stablisation for Dhanbad-Patherdih and Adra-Gomoh railway lines as well as of Chatkari Jore.

(iv) One Demonstration Scheme has been sanctioned for shifting of people from the most endangered areas of BCCL under EMSC at an capital outlay of Rs. 33.88 crores (This is presently under revision to Rs. 61.09 crores). The scheme is under implementation.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Renewal of mining lease of M/s Mysore Minerals Ltd.

750. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Karnataka has recommended for renewal of mining lease in favour of M/s Mysore Minerals Ltd., in respect of reserve forest land for mining managanese in Shimoga, Kolar, Kanakpura areas; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the Centre's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) No, Sir. As per provisions of Section 8 of the Mines and Minerals (Development & Regulation) Act, 1957, the power to grant renewal of mining leases in respect of mineral managanese ore is with the concerned State Government.